SOCIO - CULTURAL SIMULATIONS IN A SECOND/ FOREIGN LANGUAGE CLASSROOM: A NOVEL APPROACH TO ENGLISH/FRENCH LANGUAGE TEACHING AT UNIVERSITY LEVEL IN INDIA

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ABSTRACT

Man needs language as a tool to identify himself as a part of a social group and as a tool of survival in the world. Every language has its flavors rendered to it by the culture that creates and nurtures it. It, therefore, becomes important for the user of a language to be equally acquainted with the culture and civilization of the society from where the language originates. Taking this into account, a language instructor can never dispense with the socio-cultural inputs to reinforce the language acquisition by the students. This paper endeavors to establish the importance of correlating culture with language acquisition in an FL/ SL classroom. It tries to develop a pedagogy that can facilitate the learners with a better perception of the language with the help of socio-cultural inputs. The paper is a parallel study of the pedagogical aspects of an SL (English) and an FL (French) being taught at Amity University, Madhya Pradesh.

KEYWORDS: Culture, Foreign Language, Language Teaching, Multilingualism, Multiculturalism, Demographics, Ethnicity, Linguistic Similarities, Linguistic Differences

INTRODUCTION

Richards and Schmidt (2002: 472) provide this information about second language:

"In a broad sense, any language learned after one has learnt one's native language [is called second language]. However, when contrasted with foreign language, the term refers more narrowly to a language that plays a major role in a particular country or region though it may not be the first language of many people who use it. For example, the learning of English by immigrants in the US or the learning of Catalan by speakers of Spanish in Catalonia (an autonomous region of Spain) are cases of second (not foreign) language learning, because those languages are necessary for survival in those societies. English is also a second language for many people in countries like Nigeria, India, Singapore and the Philippines (plus Spanish), because English fulfils many important functions in those countries (including the business of education and government) and learning English is necessary to be successful within that context. (Some people in these countries, however, may acquire English as a first language, if it is the main language used at home)."

They also define a foreign language as a language, which is not the native language of large number of people in a particular country of region, is not used as a medium of instruction in schools and is not widely used as a medium of communication in government, media, etc. They note that foreign languages are typically taught as school subjects for the purpose of communicating with foreigners or for reading printed materials in the language (Richards and Schmidt, 2002: 206).

The social context in which a new language is learned is the deciding factor in determining whether the new language is identified as a foreign or second language. For example, a program that teaches students English in a university in India is referred to as English as a Second Language (ESL) instruction. However, in the same university and down the hall from the ESL classroom, a teacher may be instructing students in Spanish, French, or Japanese. As these languages are not the primary medium of communication in India, students in these classes are learning a foreign language (FL). The distinction is subtle but important. English language learners (ELLs) are immersed in English, and get much more authentic English inputs from speakers than students learning a foreign language (e.g., French) since this is not the medium of everyday communication in India. Thus, English learners have many sources (e.g., peers and mass media) and opportunities for receiving English language inputs. In contrast, students learning a foreign language in an Indian university typically have only their teacher to rely on for authentic language inputs. The distinctions in language learning contexts are important because they reveal how language instruction is planned and implemented. An important contrast between foreign language education and English language instruction is that in an FL class, students are not expected to develop proficiency in one or two years of instruction. Even students who reach the advanced placement level in an FL are seldom capable of showing a high level of oral proficiency in the FL. However, in ESL instruction students are expected to be main-streamed into English-only classrooms within one or two years. Thus, expectations differ depending on whether the discussion is about learning a second or a foreign language.

Seelye (1993) maintains that culture is a broad concept that embraces all aspects of human life. It includes everything people learn to do. It is everything humans have learned. Culture shapes our thoughts and actions, and often does so with a heavy hand. The Merriam-Webster dictionary says, "Culture is the integrated pattern of human knowledge, belief, and behavior that depends upon the capacity for learning and transmitting knowledge to succeeding generations." A child has a culture within him. It is because of this culture, because of the need to carry this culture forward and for the need of getting identified with the culture, that a student feels the urge to develop his language proficiency.

Although some scholars call "culture" the fifth language skill, Kramsch (1993) goes even further by saying that: "Culture in language learning is not an expendable fifth skill tacked on, so to speak, to the teaching of speaking, listening, reading, and writing. It is always in the background right from day one, ready to unsettle the good language learners when they expect it least, making evident the limitations of their hard won communicative competence, challenging the ability to make sense of the world around them." (1993, p.1)

Kramsch (1993, p.3) identifies three ways how language and culture are bound together. First, language expresses cultural reality (with words people express facts and ideas but also reflect their attitudes). Second, language embodies cultural reality (people give meanings to their experience through the means of communication). Third, language symbolizes cultural reality (people view their language as a symbol of their social identity). Tomalin and Stempleski (1993, pp.7-8) have enumerated the goals of cultural instruction. According to them, the teaching of culture should help students:

- To develop an understanding of the fact that all people exhibit culturally-conditioned behaviours;

- To develop an understanding that social variables such as age, sex, social class, and place of residence influence the way in which people speak and behave;

- To become more aware of conventional behavior in common situations in the target culture;

- To increase their awareness of the cultural connotations of words and phrases in the target language;

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- To develop the ability to evaluate and refine generalizations about the target culture, in terms of supporting evidence;

- To develop the necessary skills to locate and organize information about the target culture;

- To simulate students' intellectual curiosity about the target culture, and to encourage empathy towards its people.

- Along the same vein, Stern (1992) indicates that the aim of teaching culture should be:

- knowledge about the target culture;

- A wareness of its characteristics and of differences between the target culture and the learner's own country;

- A research-minded outlook;

- An emphasis on the understanding socio-cultural implications of language and language use;

- Affective goals; interest, intellectual curiosity, and empathy.

Certainly, language does not exist in vaccum. In this regard, taking into consideration the affinity between language and culture, it is Duranti who succinctly encapsulates how these two are interpenetrated:

'[…] to be part of a culture means to share the propositional knowledge and the rules of inference necessary to understand whether certain propositions are true (given certain premises). To the propositional knowledge, one might add the procedural knowledge to carry out tasks such as cooking, weaving, farming, fishing, giving a formal speech, answering the phone, asking for a favor, writing a letter for a job application" (Duranti, 1997: 28-29)

Clearly, everyday language is "tinged" with cultural bits and pieces. Culture and language are undeniably intertwined. Every language is a result of man's socio-cultural necessities, and therefore, bears a peculiar taste and essence of the culture that was the source of its genesis and maturity. When a student is exposed to a second language or/and a foreign language, he must understand the culture of the language that he is about to learn. Imposing a language on him without the cultural colors will not give him the flair and the élan of the country of the SL/FL.

METHODOLOGY

This paper is an outcome of the concern of language instructors towards developing the natural flair of an SL/ FL in the students, by incorporating all possible socio-cultural inputs and weaving them into the classroom design. The authors have tried out implementing the use of socio-cultural slices pertaining to the countries of the respective SL and FL, and it has resulted into better acquisition as well as increased appreciation of the language among the students. Furthermore, the technique has been tried out in one second language (English) and one foreign language (French) with equal effectiveness, and thus, promises a very positive pedagogy for language instructors all across the country (even on global platform). These slices were woven in the classroom design through the following methods:

Using Multimedia

i.e. with the support of audio - visual aids: using songs, movies, video-clips, audio-clips (dialogues, telephonic conversations, announcements at railway stations, etc.) of the relevant culture and by trying to replicate similar things in the classroom (making the students sing, do role-plays, etc.). We all enjoy listening music, watching movies and video clips at home, while travelling or studying, or even at work. Such multimedia sources which form an integral part of almost

everyone's day-to-day life, can be of great use for SL / FL teachers to open or close their lessons, to illustrate themes and topics, to add variety or a change of pace, present new vocabulary or recycle known language. There is strong practical evidence supporting the use of music in the English language classroom; there is also a growing body of research confirming that songs are a useful tool in language acquisition. In fact, musical and language processing occur in the same area of the brain. (Medina, 1993)

To facilitate this research, songs, movies, video-clips, audio-clips (dialogues, telephonic conversations, announcements at railway stations, etc.) were used in SL/ FL classrooms.

Using Fr. *Documents Authentiques* **'Authentic Documents'** in the classroom that reinforces the language acquisition process among the students. Authentic materials are a rich source of target language input. The "captivating" quality of authentic materials is important since learners who are stimulated by the input are more likely to be open to it, thus, facilitating language acquisition (Krashen 1982).

For the purpose of this research, authentic documents like newspapers, travel tickets, recipes, menu cards, photographs, city maps, brochures, leaflets, bank forms, membership forms, pamphlets, etc. were used in the SL/ FL classrooms.

Using Theater in the language classroom gives the students a window of opportunity to capture the non-verbal aspect of the target culture, thereby, encapsulating the target language more vividly. Furthermore, it also helps them hone their voice modulation, pitch and other paralinguistic facets of language. Antonin Artaud emphasizes the importance of using theater for better language acquisition – "To break through language in order to touch life, is to create or recreate the theatre" (Artaud 1958: 31).

To be able to foster the language competence of the students, the teachers ought to equip students to express themselves spontaneously and appropriately in meaningful interactive encounters, and thus, involve them with "head, heart, hand, and foot" by immersing them into an environment that exists in the target country. Since it is practically not viable for a teacher to create such an environment in a regular classroom set-up, it is suggested that teachers try using drama and theater for the said purpose as that will certainly ensure genuine language acquisition and rewarding learning experiences.

To substantiate the significance of using theater for language acquisition, during the research, the literary part of the syllabus (short stories, novels, plays, etc.) was taught by means of enactment of plays, narration of short stories, etc. Thereafter, the students were assessed to probe into their learning, and it was found that besides enhancing their verbal and non-verbal communicative competence, it also helped them understand the aesthetic elements of the literature in a manner better than the conventional lecture method.

Celebrating Different Festivals/ Parties – organizing events such as Fr. *La journée internationale de la Francophonie* 'International Francophone Day'; festivals like New Year's eve, Halloween, Christmas etc. to develop a liking among the students towards the target culture. Festivals provide colour and excitement and a sense of identity to an individual. It further benefits in providing one way of acknowledging the diverse cultures vis-à-vis different languages. Furthermore, the festivals of the target country are a rich source to familiarize the students in a meaningful and lively way with the target country culture and language. Therefore, celebrating festivals associated with the language that is taught in the classroom can be of immense help in augmenting cultural understanding, and thus, language acquisition.

To facilitate the research, the teachers simulated the local environment of the target country with the celebration of festivals in the SL/ FL classrooms. For this purpose, the students were divided into small groups representing different families, communities, etc. thereby motivating them to be a part and parcel of the target culture by means of speaking, dressing, doing role-plays, etc. as part of the celebrations and virtually the language learning process.

Cooking – Cuisine, Gastronomy – by organizing cooking competitions, finding recipes, explaining recipes, kitchen utensils, spices, getting to know about the delicacies of the relevant country, knowing their table etiquettes, etc. The students of an SL/ FL classroom can be charged with researching and downloading materials that can augment and underpin their curiosity and taste towards the target country and language. They will thus collect materials giving them an accurate view of the cuisine, gastronomy, recipes, spices etc., thereby getting immersed into the concerned SL/FL by means of language activities like identifying the ingredients, reading the recipes, finding expressions of quantities, discussing flavours, etc.

These competitions were designed as an integral part of above-mentioned festivals' celebrations as cooking goes hand-in-hand with all celebrations. Thus, student groups representing different families, communities, etc. explored different cuisines and dishes specific to the festival being celebrated. They also identified their different ingredients and prepared them as a part of the competition, depending upon the feasibility of the available resources. Submitting a written report of their experience, the students developed their writing skills, whereas explaining their final dishes gave the students an opportunity to speak, thus, reinforcing their accumulated new vocabulary and language structures/ patterns.

Lifestyle – Discussions (based on cross-cultural issues): group discussions on the issues pertaining to cross-cultural similarities and differences help a great deal in imbibing the flavors of SL/ FL with better conviction. The connotations of a language are deep-rooted in the socio-cultural values. The linguistic interpretations, by and large, are contextual. More than what is said; it is how the listener interprets the communication, which ultimately counts. Our own cultural background influences our own perception of the different aspects of language use. We quite often tend to be unconsciously ethnocentric and assume that our values, lifestyle, social norms, etc. are logical or better than those of the speakers who come from other cultural backgrounds. The semantic gap in communication is between what we think others mean and what they intend to say. Thus, in an SL/ FL classroom, it is essential to include activities and discussions centered on discourse competence, sociolinguistic competence and cultural competence.

Further, the study was supported by a final feedback from the learners regarding how far and in how many ways the incorporation of socio-cultural inputs has helped them accentuate the acquisition of their language skills alongwith amelioration of their communicative competence. The feedback was taken by means of a questionnaire filled by the students. The sample size for the study was 25 students each, for English and French languages (i.e. 50 students in all), spanning over different courses and semesters of AUMP. The data was then analyzed, resulting into a comparative illustration, presenting the percentage of effectiveness of pedagogical implications of the study vis-a-vis different aspects of linguistic acquisition.

DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS

Seelye (1988) has proposed seven goals by which students are supposed to demonstrate that they have acquired certain understandings, abilities, and attitudes towards the other language and culture:

- The Sense of Culturally Conditioned Behavior

that they understand that people act the way they do because they are using the options the society allows for satisfying basic physical and psychological needs;

- The Interaction of Language and Social Variables

that they understand that such social variables as age, sex, social class, and the place of residence affect the way people speak and behave;

- Conventional Behavior in Common Situations

That they can demonstrate how people conventionally act in the most common, mundane and crisis situations in the target language;

- Cultural Connotations of Words and Phrases

That they are able to evaluate the relative strength of a generality concerning the target culture in terms of the amount of evidence substantiating the statement;

- Evaluating Statements about a Society

That they have developed the skills needed to locate and organize material about the target culture from the library, mass media, and personal observation;

- Researching Another Culture

That the students develop the necessary skills to locate and organize information about the target culture;

- Attitudes toward Other Cultures

That they possess the curiosity about the target culture and empathy towards its people.

It goes without saying that teaching an SL/ FL is teaching a culture too, which enables the students to experience and analyze both the home and target cultures.

Classroom Observations

The socio-cultural simulations used in the classroom resulted into multifold enhancement in language assimilation among the students as they reinforced the teaching-learning process with many added advantages (falling in line with Seelye's goals).

The learners went through multiple stages of language acquisition as they were navigating across the phases of a diverse cultural adaptation. Though it was a little difficult to identify distinctly, the awareness of these phases helped a great deal to be able to appreciate, as a teacher, the "unusual" responses of the learners that were a part of the process approving and espousing a new culture.

- **Euphoria** – it is frequently termed as the "honeymoon" stage. The learners find everything to be fresh, unique and exciting. The centers of attention tend to be on the relatively conspicuous and exterior aspects of the culture such as: fashion, foodstuff, countryside, etc. Generally, they seek out resemblances and connections, and tend to ignore the difference. The initial reaction of the learners to these socio-cultural inputs was marked by excitement, as it brought freshness in the monotonous learning process. They were excited at the introduction of the simulation and

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wanted to be a part of the process.

- **Culture Shock** – culture shock is the personal disorientation a person may feel when experiencing an unfamiliar way of life due to immigration or a visit to a new country, a move between social environments, or simply travel to another type of life. This takes place when learners make an effort to become accustomed to a new culture that is very dissimilar from their home culture. Transition between the deep-settled socio-cultural norms of the homeland and those of the newly acquainted country is a complex and time taking process. The cultural differences presented in the classroom through the socio-cultural simulations pertaining to English/French, at times, came up as a shock to the learners, but this was later moderated by creating a cultural collage in the class, by inviting the learners to present a similar/ contrasting aspect of their own culture. Besides, in the diverse cultural cross-sections that we find in the classrooms in Indian Universities, it is easy to help students adopt a new culture.

- **Acceptance** – the learners gradually began to recognize and respect the differences in other cultures as well as appreciate it. This phase was characterized by the appreciative enquiry of the new culture, and eventually, greater liking for the language too. The learners now started experiencing a sense of pleasure and emotional composure with the aforesaid the socio-cultural simulations. They now became more participative in the activities and reflected a positive sense of belongingness.

- **Assimilation/Adaptation** – cultural assimilation is the process by which a person or a group's language and/or culture come to resemble those of another group… Full assimilation occurs when new members of a society become indistinguishable from members of the other group. The experiment culminated into the students having imbibed a better understanding of SL / FL with the added socio-cultural inputs as they finally had assimilated and adapted themselves to the target culture and its perspicacity.

Furthermore, these simulations prepared a ground for the natural need based language learning process as they could induce the emotional aspect of a language, which remains a prerequisite for linguistic ease and fluency. Passing through the different stages of acculturation mentioned above, students gradually adopt themselves to the new culture and language, and feel motivated to come up with their responses for the activities undertaken, thus, resulting in active participation and narrowing down of the differences between teaching inputs and learning intake.

These simulations resulted into better language cognition of the students, as they eliminated most of deterring psychological factors associated with SL/FL acquisition.

Comparative Outcomes of the Study in SL (English) and FL (French)

Having used the different socio-cultural simulations in an SL/FL classroom, across different branches, at different levels, it was observed that the students developed a more lively language-learning attitude and they reflected a significant change with regard to their keenness to participate in language learning activities. These inputs resulted in making the classroom more dynamic. Most remarkably, these inputs brought even the most passive students into the mainstream of the activities, thereby, reducing their reluctance to participate in teams. With this, it became easier for the teachers to introduce even the most difficult language patterns, as it was not the teacher who taught, but the peer group who in the zeal of competition, taught each other with the motive to win over the other groups performing to the best of their abilities, be it the songs, the festival celebrations, or even the relatively dry areas, like exploiting the authentic documents/ materials for language acquisition. The students' improvement has been marked specifically vis-à-vis different parameters such as,

improved fluency, reduced hesitation, better pronunciation, motivation to learn, motivation to speak, vocabulary enhancement, better understanding of sentence structures and peer learning.

Furthermore, the students were asked to fill a questionnaire at the end of the study, to ascertain the intangible outcomes of the new pedagogy for an SL/FL classroom. The questionnaire constituted eight areas of linguistic improvement that were to be rated on a scale of 1-5 (average-outstanding).

The following table shows a comparison of the students' response pertaining to the effectiveness of the socio-cultural simulations as a tool for better language acquisition in an SL/FL classroom:

Table 1: Tally of Student Response Pertaining to Different Areas of Language Improvement

Areas of Improvement	Scale									
	1 Average		2 Fair		3 Good		4 Very Good		5 Outstanding	
	SL	FL	SL	FL	SL	FL	SL	FL	SL	FL
Reduced Hesitation	Nil	03	01	01	07	05	07	12	10	04
Better Pronunciation	Nil	01	Nil	02	04	06	14	10	07	06
Improved Fluency	Nil	Nil	01	02	03	14	18	08	03	01
Motivation to Learn	Nil	01	Nil	Nil	04	05	07	11	13	09
Motivation to Speak	Nil	01	Nil	02	04	03	09	09	12	10
Vocabulary Enhancement	Nil	01	02	01	06	09	09	07	07	07
Better Understanding of Sentence Structures	01	Nil	01	02	02	05	08	11	12	07
Peer Learning	Nil	Nil	Nil	03	04	06	07	11	14	05

The majority of the students' response lies between 3/5 (good) to 5/5 (outstanding) in all the categorized areas of linguistic improvement, in both SL(English) and FL(French), thus substantiating the initial hypothesis.
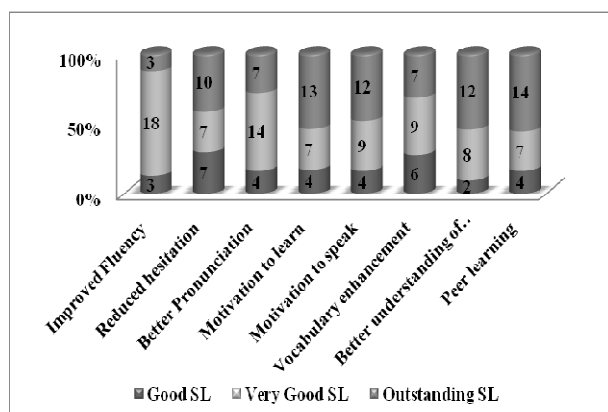

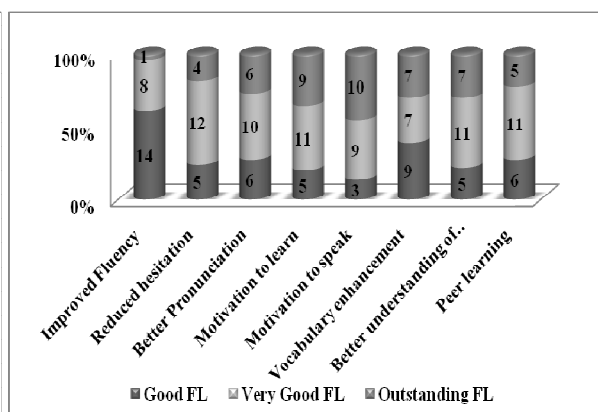**Figure 1: Outcomes of the Study in Sl (English)**   **Figure 2: Outcomes of the Study in Fl (French)**

The study reveals that using different cultural inputs in an SL/ FL classroom not only creates an environment conducive for learning but it also fosters students' inclination and positive attitude towards language leaning. The different elements of these inputs have had different level of impact on SL / FL learning.

Improved Fluency

Through the simulations, the learners got an opportunity to experience real life conversation situations in the target language. As depicted through table 1, fig.1 and fig.2, socio-cultural inputs in the language classroom helped the

students in improving their language fluency to a great degree. Majority of students have rated it as 4 (Very Good) in SL, and 3 (Good) in FL, on a scale of 5, for its effectiveness as a tool for fluency enhancement.

Reduced Hesitation

All students, regardless of any culture, age or stream of study, have some kind of anxiety and hesitation in speaking a second/foreign language. The socio-cultural simulations resulted into being an outstanding tool for reducing hesitation in speaking SL and FL. As per the data, majority of students rated it between 4 and 5 (Very Good - Outstanding) on a scale of 5, for its effectiveness as a tool to reduce hesitation in SL and FL, respectively.

Better Pronunciation

The socio-cultural inputs provided the students with an interesting platform to practice pronunciation. The multimedia inputs like songs, movie clips, etc. gave them an opportunity to listen, view and imitate the correct articulation and accent, and that too, in a more interesting and stimulating way. The prominent band of the graph comes under the scale of 4-5 (Very Good - Outstanding) for the effectiveness of the tool for better pronunciation, both in SL and FL.

Motivation to Learn and Speak

The socio-cultural simulations in an SL/FL classroom create a natural, community-based environment, wherein the students feel motivated to learn and speak the language, as it reduces their hesitation and stimulates their desire to imitate the natural flow of the language shown in the audio/ video clip, and the other cultural slices. If the class is divided into groups and some competitions (singing, role plays etc.) are held, the result is optimum. Maximum students unanimously rated it as 5/5 (Outstanding) tool for motivating the students to learn and speak both SL and FL.

Vocabulary Enhancement

Having been motivated to speak the SL/FL through the proposed socio-cultural simulations, they feel a natural innate desire to acquire new words, to participate in group activities and to contribute to them. Eventually, this accelerates their process of vocabulary building, effortlessly, thereby adding on to their lexis and ameliorating their diction. The prominent band of the graph comes under the scale of 4-5 (Very Good - Outstanding) in SL, and 3-5 (Good - Outstanding) in FL, for the efficacy of the device for vocabulary enhancement.

Better Understanding of Sentence Structures

While watching movies, listening songs, participating in class activities involving group dynamics, wherein all the students are from different linguistic competency levels, the appropriate sentence structures of the target language naturally settle down in the sub-conscious minds of the learners, thus, leading to their improved judgment on the grammatical appropriateness of the sentences, even without a formal training of the same. The prominent band of the graph comes under the scale of 4-5 (Very Good - Outstanding), both in SL and FL, thereby indicating a strong liking of the students for this device in helping them improve their understanding of sentence structures.

Peer Learning

Since all cultural simulations are put to use in group activities, thus, students are in the process of constant interaction with each other, which leads to a fairly increased scope of peer learning. The cultural diversity in terms of their backgrounds further paves the way for mutual exchange of ideas, thus, adding to better comprehension of different

linguistic elements. The students' feedback indicates that the efficiency of the tool to promote peer learning is Outstanding (5/5) in SL and Very Good (4/5) in FL.

CONCLUSIONS

Integrating culture in an SL/ FL classroom helps present another culture in a way which may foster intercultural understanding and appreciation which is a prerequisite for acquiring special knowledge of how cultures are organized - their value system, their institutions, their interpersonal relationships. The main premise of this paper is that communication is more than a matter of language proficiency and that, apart from enhancing and enriching communicative competence, cultural competence can also lead to empathy and respect toward different cultures as well as promote objectivity and cultural perspicacity.

Use of multimedia, use of authentic materials, use of theater, celebrating different festivals / parties, organizing cooking competitions, discussions on lifestyle and cross-cultural issues have enormously motivated the students and have helped them significantly in language acquisition alongwith the development of natural flair and inclination for language learning (SL/ FL): use of multimedia be it songs, audio-clips, video-clips, PowerPoint presentations, etc. helped them reach virtually in the local setup of the target country and its culture, thereby, giving them a true vision of the similarities and the differences vis-à-vis the culture, and thus, the language; use of authentic materials, be it travel tickets, menu cards, post cards, receipts, brochures, etc. gave them a first-hand experience in terms of being a rich source of target language input, which helped them acquaint themselves with the SL/ FL and understand the language use in local context in terms of socio-linguistic components. Furthermore, this tool proved enriching by presenting a comparative study of the similar documents used in students' own country; use of theater and drama in SL/ FL classroom provides a platform to the students to practice the right accent of the language under study alongwith the right voice modulation and intonation, grasping verbal and non-verbal elements of the language as well as augmenting their language affinity by dressing up for the characters and exploring the historical relevance of the plot; by celebrating different festivals/ parties and by organizing cooking competitions, students got an opportunity for academic relief while engaging in lighter events and socio-linguistic activities that present a remarkable language learning set-up; discussions on lifestyle and cross-cultural issues further fortified their preparedness for working in today's globalised work environment and work culture. Besides, it helped them eliminate the possible cross-cultural barriers and bridge the intercultural gaps that might lead to creation of stereotypes, and may even lead to cultural shocks in certain situations.
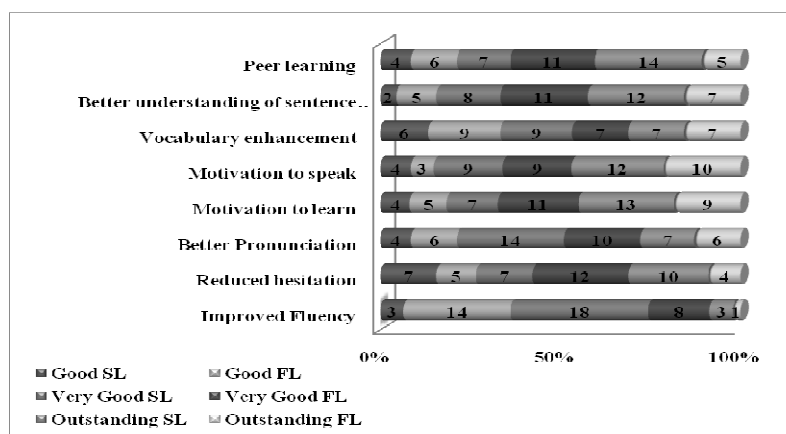

Figure 3: Comparative Outcomes of the Study in SL/FL

The findings of the study suggest that incorporating culture in an SL/ FL classroom is significantly beneficial in terms of language skills, raising cultural awareness, changing attitudes towards native and target societies, and contribution to the teaching profession. The participants in this study emphasized a significant amount of transformation in their attitude towards language acquisition in terms of improved fluency, reduced hesitation, better pronunciation, motivation to learn, motivation to speak, vocabulary enhancement, better understanding of sentence structures and peer learning. This is further reinforced by the findings depicted in the above graph, where the students' feedback primarily lies within the band of 4-5 (Very Good –Outstanding) for all the parameters, for both SL and FL.

Culture, having been referred to as "the fifth skill" by many scholars, should be an integral component of every language curriculum. To achieve this, the teacher, at his/ her own discretion and viability of resources, should set tangible and realistic goals, and apply one of the suggested techniques and activities, or even design his/ her own activities for teaching language by means of using socio-cultural simulations in an SL/ FL classroom. The scholars (Kramsch, 1993, Byram, 1997, Seelye, 1993, Chastain, 1988) unanimously agree that language and culture should be integrated into SL/ FL classrooms and they should not be perceived as two separate entities. Language is seen as part of culture and culture as part of language, which is why they cannot be separated and should be taught together (Brown 2007a, p.177).

This study has implications for introducing culture in the curriculum of language teaching departments. Incorporated in the curriculum, it would prove to be a vital component of language learning and teaching. As this study illustrates, it has a great deal to offer to the development of communicative competence as well as other skills in the instruction of any language.

We have tried to emphasize the importance of using socio-cultural simulations for language acquisition in an SL/FL classroom, and to present a range of practical techniques that have been found to be effective and successful in culture-based language teaching and learning as culture is our social legacy as contrasted with our organic heredity. It regulates our lives at every turn.

As the study shows, the incorporation of socio-cultural inputs in a language classroom accentuates language acquisition equally in an SL (English)/ FL (French) classroom. Therefore, the same methodology could be used for better teaching-learning in any language classroom.

However, cultural inputs need to be given keeping in mind the cross-cultural differences and intercultural perspectives. Otherwise, it may come as a shock to the learners, or result into creation of stereotypes among them.

Limitations of Study: This study could be done at a wider sphere provided the teacher has an access to socio-cultural tools such as visits to museums, art galleries, restaurants, international festivals etc. However, with the limited resources available at our disposal, we found the study quite result-oriented. It has helped us in giving the students a better perception as well as increased affinity to SL/ FL, which clearly shows the prospects of its application at the institutions located at places that have a better access to the aforesaid resources.

APPENDIX

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Research Questionnaire

We have used several cultural inputs (songs, videos, movie-clips, fashion etc.) in our language classroom. Please respond with your feedback as to what extent these tools have helped you in your language acquisition pertaining to the given areas. Please respond on the scale of:

1 = average, 2 = fair, 3 = good, 4 = very good, 5 = outstanding

	1	2	3	4	5
a) Improved Fluency	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
b) Reduced hesitation	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
c) Better Pronunciation	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
d) Motivation to learn	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
e) Motivation to speak	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
f) Vocabulary enhancement	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
g) Better understanding of sentence structures	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
h) Peer learning	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

RESPONDENT DETAILS

Name :_____

Branch : _____

Semester/Year:_____

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